

**STATUS**

Claims 1-32 are pending in the application and have been rejected.

Claims 7-11, 13, 14, 21-25, 27, and 28 have been objected to.

Claims 1-28 have been rejected under 35 USC 112 for an antecedent basis issue.

Claims 1-5, 12, 15-19, and 26 have been rejected under 35 USC 102(b).

Claims 6 and 20 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a).

Claims 7-11, 13, 14, 21-25, 27, and 28 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the objection under 35 USC 112 and to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

**EXTENSION OF TIME**

A separate petition for an extension of time of three (3) months to respond to 18 February 2004 to respond to the outstanding Office Action, along with the appropriate fee for a large entity of \$950.00, is enclosed.

**EXCESS CLAIMS FEE**

This response has resulted in the addition of 3 new independent claims and 9 new total claims, and the excess claims fee for a large entity of \$420.00 is enclosed.